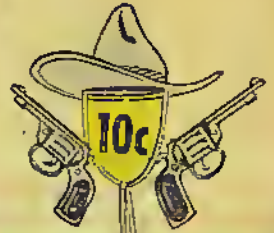


This Issue Contains 52 Pages



AN *Aven* COMIC
ANC

NO. 6



COW PUNCHER



WALTER
JOHNSON





WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM



the BLACKSMITH BANDITS

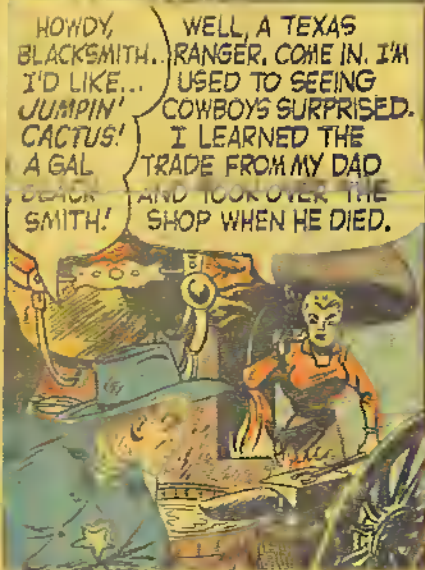
THE TEXAS RANGER, SYMBOL OF LAW AND ORDER IN THE LAWLESS WEST, THOUGHT HE'D SEEN ALL THE TRICKS THERE WERE. BUT THAT WAS BEFORE THAT NIGHT WHEN HE RODE INTO THE LITTLE TOWN OF BROKEN BRANCH, JUST SOUTH OF THE BADLANDS. THERE HE FOUND A BAND OF OUTLAWS WHO OUTDID THEIR BREED IN TRICKERY. BUT THEY ALSO LEARNED A FEW THINGS, MAINLY, THAT THERE WASN'T A VARMIN'T CLEVER ENOUGH TO OUTSMART A TEXAS RANGER!

SET IS LATE AT NIGHT WHEN THE TEXAS RANGER RIDES INTO BROKEN BRANCH...

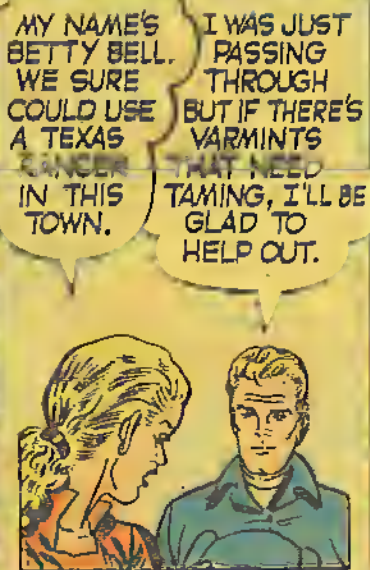


WHOA, THERE! GOOD, THERE'S A LIGHT IN THE BLACKSMITH'S YET. I'VE GOT TO GET A SHOE TIGHTENED ON THUNDER.

AND JUST THEN...



HOWDY, BLACKSMITH. WELL, A TEXAS RANGER, COME IN. I'M I'D LIKE... USED TO SEEING JUMPIN' COWBOYS SURPRISED. CACTUS! I LEARNED THE A GAL TRADE FROM MY DAD DEAK AND TOOK OVER THE SMITH! SHOP WHEN HE DIED.



MY NAME'S BETTY BELL. WE SURE COULD USE A TEXAS RANGER IN THIS TOWN. I WAS JUST PASSING THROUGH BUT IF THERE'S VARMINTS THAT NEED TAMING, I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP OUT.



GIT THE GAL. WE'LL TAKE CARE O' HIM! WHA...? WELL, SPEAK OF VARMINTS AND THEY SHOW UP!



RECKON YOU BOYS HAVEN'T HEARD IT'S NOT GOOD SENSE TO ANGLE WITH A TEXAS RANGER!

WHAM!

UUGH!




I'LL GIT YOU WITH THIS!

YES... BUT FIRST YOU'VE GOT TO HIT ME WITH IT!




THIS'LL CALM
YOU DOWN,
RANNY!



THAT'S IT, IN
WITH HER!
THAT'LL KEEP HIM
BUSY WHILE WE
GIT!


THOSE NO-
GOOD ORNERY
VARMINTS!
THEY'LL BURN
HER ALIVE!

HELP!!



OWOoo...
HELP! I'M
ON FIRE...
OOOoH!


I'LL HAVE YOU
OUT IN A
SECOND.



THERE! QUICK, HELP
BEAT OUT THE FLAMES
ON YOUR CLOTHES.

YES..
OOH...I--I
THOUGHT I
WAS DONE
FOR!

AND MOMENTS LATER...



IT'S LUCKY YOU
DIDN'T HAVE A BIG
FIRE GOING.

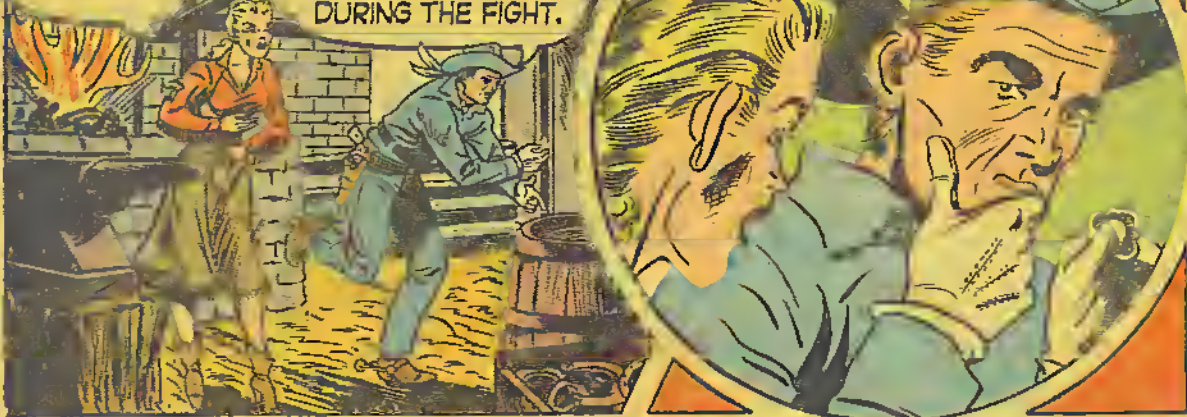
TOO BAD THOSE COYOTES
GOT AWAY. THEY WERE
TRYING TO ROB YOUR
DAY'S EARNINGS,
NO DOUBT.

I DON'T
THINK SO... I
SEE MY CASH
BOX HASN'T
EVEN BEEN
TOUCHED.

LOOK HERE...THEY
TOOK ONE OF MY
HAND-BELLOWS
AND A SLEDGE
HAMMER!

THOSE ARE ODD THINGS FOR A
BAND OF VARMINTS TO STEAL AND
LOOK AT THIS FANCY BUTTON.
ONE OF THOSE HOMEBRES
MUST'VE LOST IT
DURING THE FIGHT.

THIS SHOULD BE EASY
TO MATCH WITH THAT
BUFFALO-HEAD
DESIGN ON IT.



THE
NEXT
MORNING,
AT
BETTY'S
BLACK-
SMITH
SHOP...

YOU ASKED ME TO SINGLE OUT
THE TOWN'S VARMINTS, RANGER. THERE'S
ONE...YELLOW KESSEL, THEY
CALL HIM.

YELLOW
KESSEL,
EH?

ELLIS WATSON'S
BELL'S
BLACKSMITH SHOP

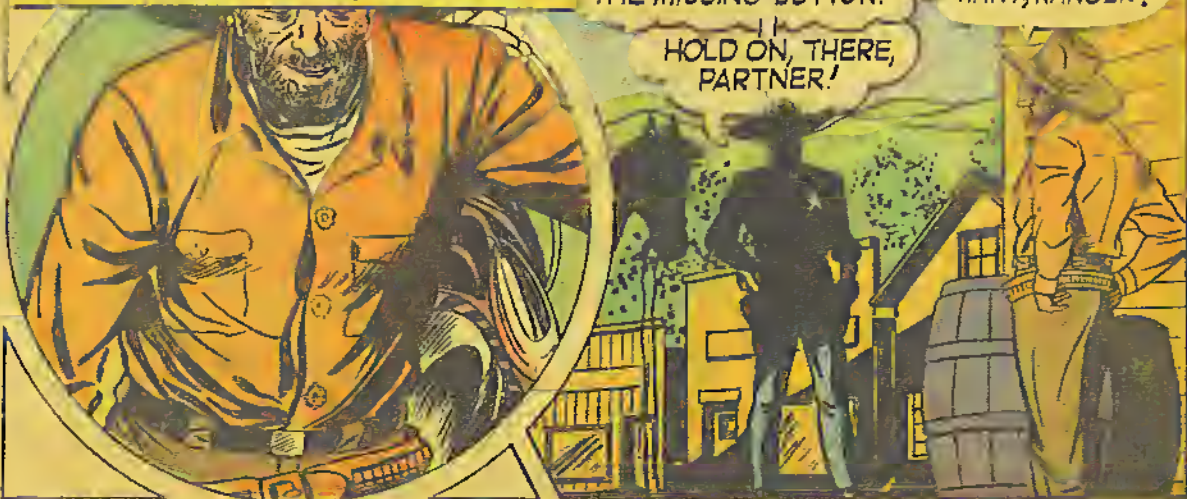


WHEN THE RANGER NEARS
YELLOW KESSEL, HE SEES...

A PERFECT MATCH.. IT'S
THE MISSING BUTTON.

WHAT DO YUH
WANT, RANGER?

HOLD ON, THERE,
PARTNER!



YOU WERE ONE OF THE HOMBRES WHO RAIDED THE BLACKSMITH'S LAST NIGHT, KESSEL. THIS BUTTON OF YOURS I FOUND AFTER THE FIGHT PROVES IT!

NO, IT DOESN'T RANGER. I...ER... LOST IT IN HER SHOP WHEN I WAS THERE GITTIN' MUH HOSS SHOED!

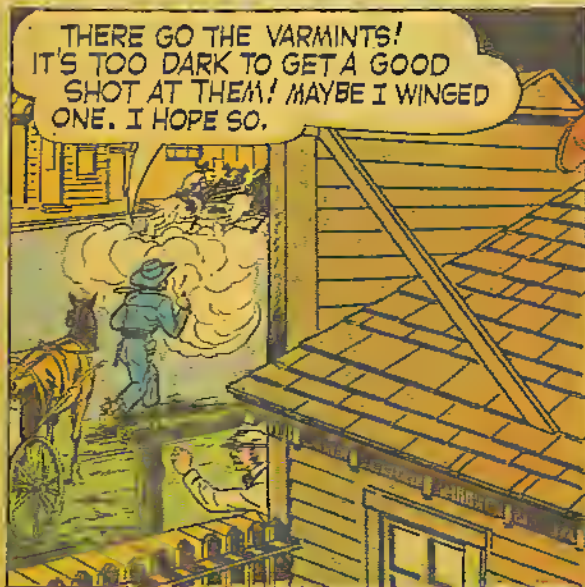


SURELY YOU DON'T BELIEVE THAT STORY, DO YOU?

NO, BUT I COULDN'T MAKE AN ARREST ON SUCH SLIM EVIDENCE. I'LL FIND MORE PROOF, THOUGH.



THERE GO THE VARMINTS! IT'S TOO DARK TO GET A GOOD SHOT AT THEM! MAYBE I WINGED ONE. I HOPE SO.



YUH AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' ON ME, RANGER.

HE COULD BE TELLING THE TRUTH. I'LL LET HIM GO FOR NOW. I'LL NEED MORE PROOF THAN JUST THIS BUTTON!

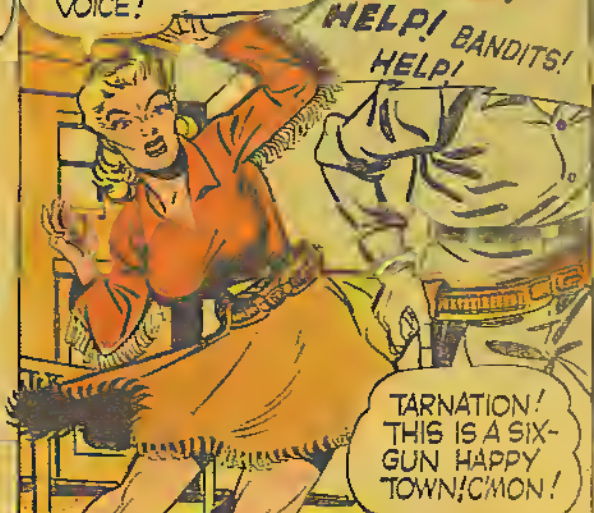


LATER, THAT NIGHT...

THAT'S FROM BENSON'S GENERAL STORE. THAT'S OLD BENSON'S VOICE!

BANG!
BANG!

HELP! BANDITS! HELP!



TARNATION! THIS IS A SIX-GUN HAPPY TOWN! C'MON!

THE BANDITS FLEE INTO THE BLACKNESS, AND...

YOU'RE MR. BENSON, I TAKE IT. ARE YOU HURT?

NO, RANGER. FUNNY THING ABOUT IT...ALL THEY WERE AFTER WERE SOME SHEETS O' METAL.



METAL SHEETS
LIKE THOSE
RIGHT THERE.
THEY WENT
RIGHT TO 'EM
AN' CARRIED
'EM OFF.

HMM... THIS IS
STRANGE.
THOSE COYOTES
DON'T SEEM TO
HANKER AFTER
MONEY!

RETURNING TO THE SHOP...

THE SHOP'S BEEN BROKEN
INTO WHILE WE WERE
GONE... I SEE A PAIR OF
HOLDING IRONS ARE MISSING!

I CAN'T FIGURE
THESE FUNNY
ROBBERIES!

BUT I KNOW THIS. ONE GANG HAS
DONE ALL THESE ODD ROBBERIES AND
THEY ADD UP TO SOME KIND OF SCHEME
ON THEIR PART. I'VE A KIND OF THEORY
I'M GOING TO TRY OUT.

KESSEL, I'M ACCUSING
YOU OF BEING BEHIND
THESE ROBBERIES
LATELY. IF YOU
WANT TO SHOOT
IT OUT, START
REACHING FOR
YOUR GUN!

I KNOW
BETTER'N
TUH TRY
TUH DRAW
AGIN A
TEXAS
RANGER..

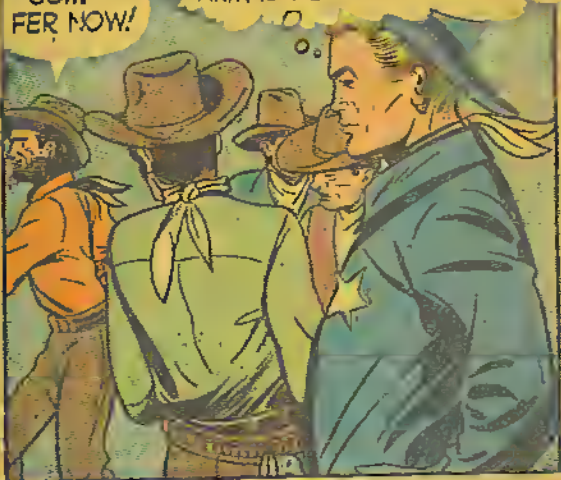
GO AHEAD,
BOSS... DRAW
ON HIM!

WELL, KESSEL?
I CHALLENGE YOU
TO DRAW!

NO, RANGER... NOT NOW. MUH ARM'S... ER...
SPRAINED. I'LL TAKE YUH UP ON
THAT CHALLENGE TOMORROW.

C'MON,
BOYS, LET'S
GO...
FER NOW!

THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO HEAR.
THAT STORY ABOUT A SPRAINED
ARM IS PLENTY FALSE.



NOW I KNOW MY HUNCH WAS RIGHT AND
I AIM TO BE READY FOR THOSE SLICK COYOTES
TOMORROW! BUT FIRST I'VE GOT TO
STOP HERE.



THE RANGER,
CERTAIN HE HAS
UNRAVELED THE
PLANS OF
KESSEL AND HIS
MEN, SETS HIS
OWN COUNTER-
MOVES INTO
MOTION AND THEN
THE NEXT DAY
DAWN'S
PEACEFULLY
ENOUGH, BUT
SUDDENLY...

... THE TOWN ERUPTS IN A BLAZE OF GUNFIRE!



KESSEL AND HIS MOB
HAVE HIT TOWN. THEY'RE
SHOOTIN' UP EVERYTHING!

KEEP YO'RE
HEAD DOWN,
JED. THEY'RE
SURE ON THE
WARPATH!

YEEOWW!
SOME FUN,
EH BOYS!
NOW WHERE'S
THET TEXAS
RANGER?

COME ON
OUT O' HIDIN',
RANGER. I'LL...
HUH???

I'M READY
AND WAITING
KESSEL...
RIGHT
HERE.

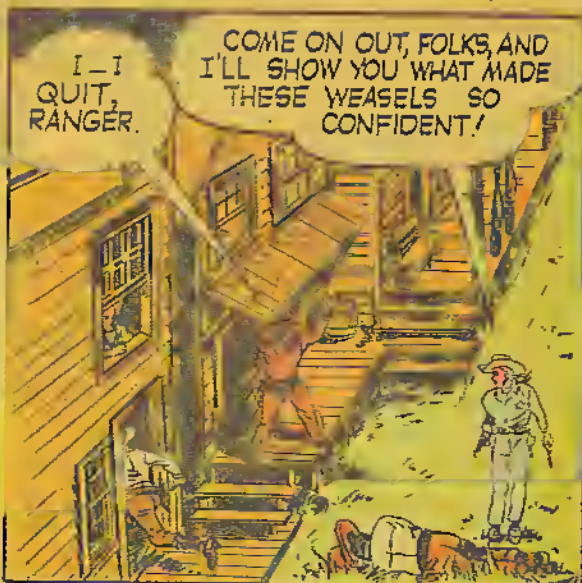
YO'RE MISTAKE, RANGER...
I CAN'T LOSE THIS
GUN-FIGHT!





RECKON YOU GUESSED
WRONG, KESSEL. AND
HERE'S A TASTE OF
THE SAME FOR
YOUR PALS!

UUUHH!



I-I
QUIT,
RANGER.

COME ON OUT, FOLKS, AND
I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT MADE
THESE WEASELS SO
CONFIDENT!



LOOK, FOLKS...THEY'RE ALL
WEARING HOME-MADE ARMOR
OF SHEET METAL COVERING
THEIR ENTIRE BODIES EXCEPT
THEIR ARMS AND HEADS.

BY
GOLLY! THEY
MADE IT
THEMSELVES,
JUST THICK
ENOUGH FOR
BULLETS NOT TO
PENETRATE!

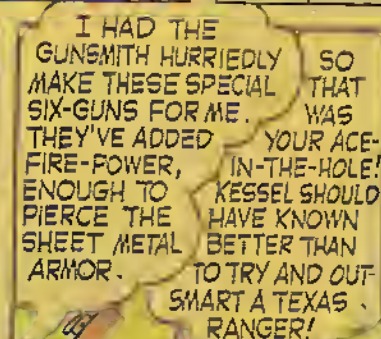


EXACTLY! THE ODD THEFTS GOT ME
FIGURING. I PUT TWO-AND-TWO
TOGETHER AND THAT WAS IT!



I TRIED TO GET KESSEL INTO A
GUN-FIGHT ON PURPOSE.
WHEN KESSEL REFUSED MY
CHALLENGE YESTERDAY, I
KNEW MY THEORY WAS RIGHT.
BUT I HAD MY OWN
ACE IN THE HOLE.

WHAT
READY. WAS THAT,
RANGER?



I HAD THE
GUNSMITH HURRIEDLY
MAKE THESE SPECIAL
SIX-GUNS FOR ME. SO
THEY'VE ADDED YOUR ACE-
FIRE-POWER, IN-THE-HOLE!
ENOUGH TO KESSEL SHOULD
PIERCE THE SHEET METAL HAVE KNOWN
ARMOR. BETTER THAN
TO TRY AND OUT-
SMART A TEXAS
RANGER!

AND SO, AS THE DUSK FINALLY
GATHERS OVER BROKEN BRANCH,
A LONE FIGURE RIDES ON TO FIND
OTHER PLACES WHERE CRIME
NEEDS THE POWER OF...
THE TEXAS RANGER!

G-GOODBY, RANGER...
AND... GOODLUCK.

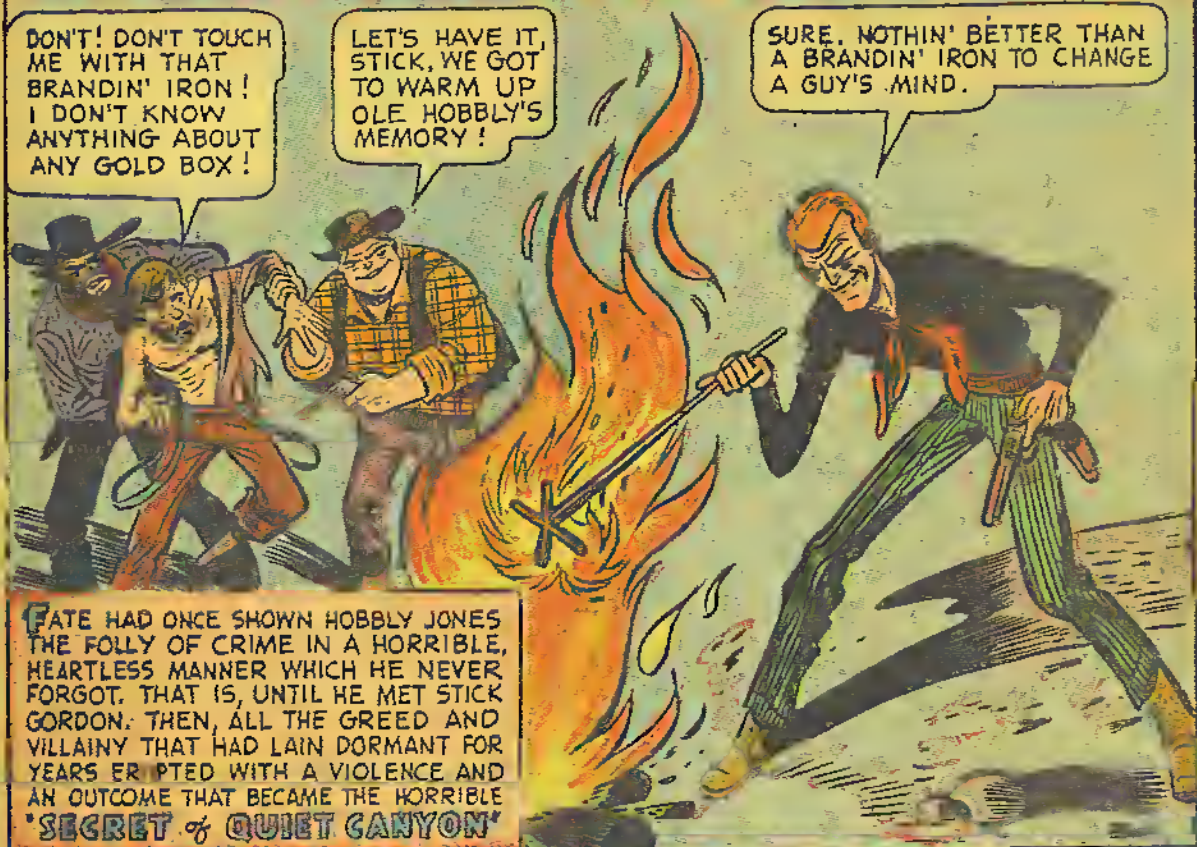


The Secret of QUIET CANYON

DON'T! DON'T TOUCH ME WITH THAT BRANDIN' IRON! I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ANY GOLD BOX!

LET'S HAVE IT, STICK, WE GOT TO WARM UP OLE HOBBLY'S MEMORY!

SURE, NOTHIN' BETTER THAN A BRANDIN' IRON TO CHANGE A GUY'S MIND.



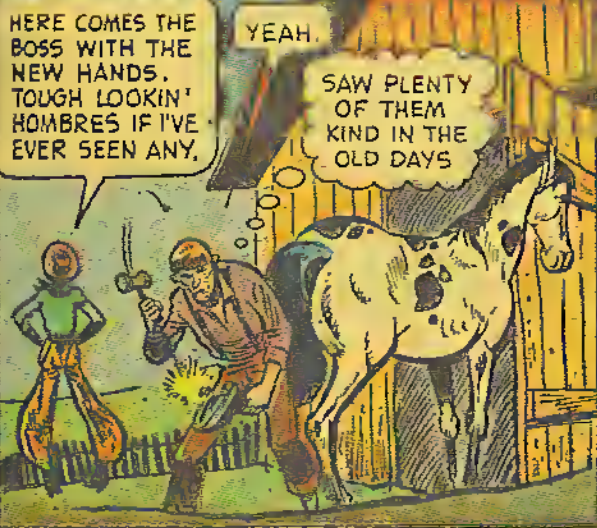
FATE HAD ONCE SHOWN HOBBLY JONES THE FOLLY OF CRIME IN A HORRIBLE, HEARTLESS MANNER WHICH HE NEVER FORGOT. THAT IS, UNTIL HE MET STICK GORDON. THEN, ALL THE GREED AND VILLAINY THAT HAD LAIN DORMANT FOR YEARS ERUPTED WITH A VIOLENCE AND AN OUTCOME THAT BECAME THE HORRIBLE 'SECRET of QUIET CANYON'

ONE HOT SUMMER AFTERNOON IN THE '70'S...

HERE COMES THE BOSS WITH THE NEW HANDS. TOUGH LOOKIN' HOMBRES IF I'VE EVER SEEN ANY.

YEAH.

SAW PLENTY OF THEM KIND IN THE OLD DAYS



STICK, LARD, LOLO... MEET TWO OF MY REGULAR HANDS, BEN DUGAN AND HOBBLY JONES.

KEEP YOUR HAND TO YOURSELF, CRIPPLE!

GLAD TO MEET YUH, STICK.





IS THAT HOW YOU SHOW YOUR FRIENDLINESS--BY SPITTING PAST A GUY'S EAR?

AIN'T MY BUSINESS TO BE FRIENDLY, MR. MACKLIN HIRED US TO GUARD STOCK



I'M AFRAID, BOYS, WE'LL HAVE TO PUT UP WITH UNFRIENDLINESS TILL AFTER ROUND-UP TIME

I DON'T LIKE THEIR LOOKS.



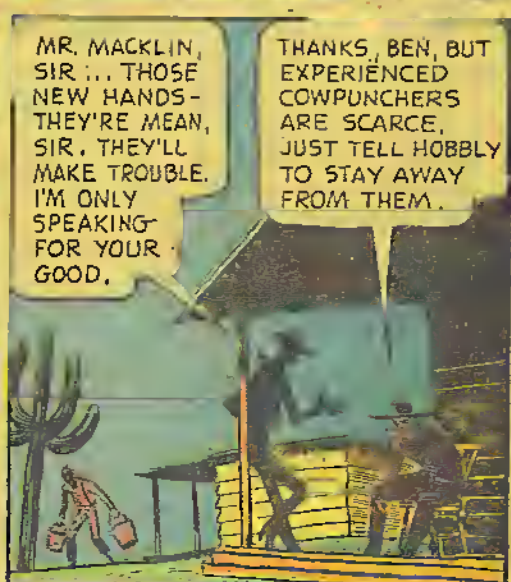
THAT NIGHT... HEY, CRIPPLE, GET ME A DRINK OF WATER--AN' BRING SOME FOR MY FRIENDS!

YOU'VE BEEN RIDIN' POOR HOBBLY ALL EVENING! NOBODY'S BEGGING--YOU TO BE FRIENDLY--BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A BULLY, CUT IT OUT!



AIMIN' TO MAKE ME, LOUDMOUTH?

DON'T YOU GO MESSIN' INTO MY BUSINESS, BEN. THE BOYS'RE JUST HAVIN' A LITTLE FUN. A PEG LEG MUST TICKLE THEIR FUNNY BONES.



MR. MACKLIN, SIR... THOSE NEW HANDS--THEY'RE MEAN, SIR. THEY'LL MAKE TROUBLE. I'M ONLY SPEAKING FOR YOUR GOOD.

THANKS, BEN, BUT EXPERIENCED COWPUNCHERS ARE SCARCE, JUST TELL HOBBLY TO STAY AWAY FROM THEM.



LEAVE THE SIXER ALONE, STICK, I AIN'T HERE TO MAKE TROUBLE, I JEST WANT TO PALAVER A SECOND.

YEAH?, WHAT ABOUT?



I'M WISE TO YUH HAY-PITCHERS. YUH AIN'T RANCH HANDS. YORE THREE HOMBRES WHO ROB AN' KILL FOR A LIVIN'. IT'S WRITTEN ALL OVER YORE FACES.



HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH? MAYBE YOU'VE SEEN SOME WANTED POSTERS! SPIT IT OUT!

I... I K-NOW BECAUSE I USED TO BE A HIGHWAYMAN MYSELF!

HAW-HAW! YOU?
WITH YOUR GIMPY
LEG? HAW-HAW!

I WASN'T BORN
WITH IT. I GOT
IT BLOWN OFF
BY A SHERIFF
AFTER A BANK
JOB IN DALLAS!
I WAS TWICE
THE MAN YOU
ARE!

I'VE SEEN ENOUGH TOUGH
GUYS IN MY TIME TO SPOT
'EM IN A SECOND. YUH
AIN'T HERE TO WORK
FOR MACKLIN. YUH'RE
HERE TO PULL A JOB!

WAIT A MINUTE!
THE GIMP IS UP
TO SOMETHIN'...

SHALL I
BLAST
HIM,
STICK?

I WANT A
PIECE OF
YORE JOB,
THAT'S ALL.
IF YUH
TURN ME
DOWN, I'LL
TELL MACKLIN
WHO YUH
REALLY
ARE.

YUH
WANT
MY
ANSWER,
HOBBLY?

HERE IT IS!
GET THE BLAZES
OUTA HERE!

YEOW-WW!

AIN'T WE
GOIN' TO
KILL HIM,
STICK?

GET THIS, HOBBLY. KEEP
YOUR TRAP SHUT OR WE'LL
BLAST YOU TO BITS!

HIM TWICE AS TOUGH
AS ME! HA-HA! HIM
A BAD MAN! HAW-HAW!
AIN'T LAUGHED LIKE
THIS IN YEARS! HA-HA!

I WAS LOCO TO TELL
'EM ABOUT MYSELF
BUT THEY'LL BE SORRY
THEY KICKED ME
AROUN'

TWO WEEKS LATER...

WE GOT THE STAGE SCHEDULE
DOWN PERFECT. NOW JUST KEEP
YOUR EARS OPEN FOR NEWS
OF A HEAVY GOLD SHIPMENT.
THEN ALL THE LAMBIN' WORK
WILL PAY OFF BIG...

FOR WEEKS
HOBBLY CLUNG-
TO STICK GORDON
LIKE A SHADOW...
FOLLOWING HIM
EVERYWHERE...
LISTENING- TO
EVERY WORD...

LOOK, STICK, AIN'T IT
ABOUT TIME WE DID
THE JOB? I'M FED UP
WITH THIS OUTRIDIN'.

OKAY, TOMORROW
WE START
CLOCKIN' THE
STAGE SCHEDULE.

SO IT'S THE
MAXWELL
STAGE
THEY'RE
AFTER....!

FER YOU OR
ME, STICK?

I'VE GOT TO SAY ONE THING, MR. MACKLIN. THOSE THREE TOUGH GUYS KNOW THEIR BUSINESS. AND THEY'RE NOT THROWIN' THEIR WEIGHT AROUND LIKE THEY USED TO.

GLAD TO HEAR IT, BEN. I INTEND TO BUY ANOTHER TWO THOUSAND HEAD AND I WANTED TO BE SURE I HAD THE MEN TO HANDLE THEM.

LATER ...

IT'S SETTLED, THEN, BEN. I'M ASKIN' THE BANK AT SAW MILL TO SHIP ME \$30,000 IN GOLD ON THE MAXWELL STAGE TOMORROW NIGHT.

AM I GLAD I WENT TO THE KITCHEN. WAIT'LL STICK. HEARS THIS!

THIS IS IT! WE HOLD UP THE MAXWELL STAGE TOMORROW NIGHT!

YOU FELLERS'RE GONNA HAVE COMPANY!



AT THE ROUND-UP NEXT NIGHT ...

THE HERD'S MIGHTY RESTLESS TONIGHT, BEN. TH' BOYS AN' ME AIN'T SLEEPY SO WE FIGGERED WE'D RIDE THE GRAVEYARD SHIFT AN' SEE THAT EVERY-THING'S OKAY.

SURE, STICK.

THE DIRTY LIARS! I'LL FOLLOW THEM AS SOON AS THEY'RE OUTA SIGHT ...

AN HOUR LATER ...

I CAN'T CATCH UP WITH THEM! THEY'RE RIDIN' TOO FAST AN' I AIN'T IN CONDITION. AT THIS RATE I'LL HAVE TO MEET 'EM ON THE WAY BACK!



HERE THEY COME, STICK, -ON TIME. THEM WEEKS OF CLOCKIN' SURE PAID OFF!

THERE'S A SHOTGUN MESSENGER ON TOP. THAT MEANS THEY'RE CARRYIN' GOLD, STICK.

KEEP SHOOTIN' TILL I TELL YUH TO STOP. OKAY, --LET'S GO!

THAT'S THE STUFF! THEY'LL CRASH FOR SURE!



KEEP UP THE FIRIN'! WE
DON'T EVEN WANT A HORSE
FOR A WITNESS!

YOU DUMMIES!
WHAT'RE YOU
WAITIN' FOR?
FOLLOW 'EM
UP! FINISH
'EM OFF!

CRASH!!

CRACK!

BANG!

THERE GOES THE LAST
OF 'EM! WHAT A HAUL!
OVER \$30,000! WHAT'LL
WE DO NOW, STICK, TAKE
IT ON THE LAM?

NO, YOU FAT FOOL!
IF WE DISAPPEARED
SUDDENLY, THEY'LL
KNOW IT'S US!

WE'RE GOIN' TO BURY
THIS GOLD SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN HERE AN'
THE RANCH. THEN
JOIN BEN LIKE NOthin'
HAPPENED. WE'LL WAIT
A COUPLE O' MONTHS,
THEN GIVE MACKLIN
NOTICE, DIG UP THE
BOX AN' BE OFF!

I GOT TO
HAND IT
TO YOU,
STICK,
YOU SURE
GOT THE
BRAINS
FOR THIS
RACKET!

A HALF HOUR LATER,
HOBBLY SEES THREE
MEN BUSY DIGGIN'...

IT'S THEM! THEY ROB-
BED THE STAGE... NOW
THEY'RE BURYIN' THE
GOLD! THEY MUST BE
FIGGERIN' ON DIGGIN' IT
UP LATER, BUT THEY'RE
FIGGERIN' WITHOUT
HOBBLY.

AN HOUR LATER...

I'LL TEACH 'EM TO KICK OLE
HOBBLY AROUND. I'LL HIDE
THIS GOLD IN QUIET CANYON
WHERE THEY'LL NEVER FIND
IT! THEY'LL GO CRAZY
TRYIN' TO FIGGER WHAT
WENT WRONG!

MIGHTY SLICK OF
STICK TO TAKE A
LEGIT JOB FOR A
FRONT... BUT NOT
SLICK ENOUGH FOR
OLE HOBBLY!
HEH! HEH!

PSST! LOOK
WHO'S SNEAK-
ING BACK
INTO CAMP!
I THOUGHT
OLE GIMPY
LEG WAS
FAST
ASLEEP.

HE MIGHT'VE BEEN UP
TO SOMETHIN'. I'LL RIDE
BACK AN' SEE IF THE
GOLD'S STILL THERE...

HALF-HOUR LATER...

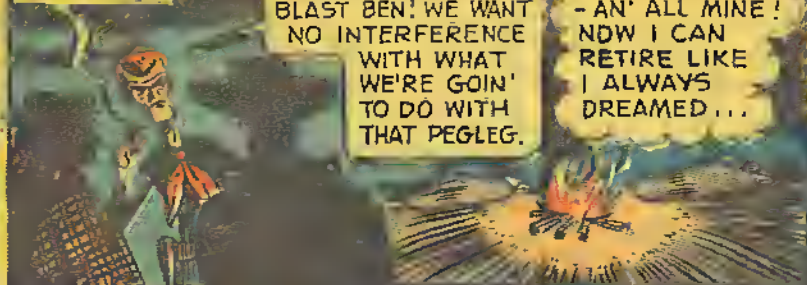
HOLY SMOKE! WE'VE BEEN DOUBLE-CROSSED! THAT LOUSY CRIPPLE TRAILED US AN' HID THE GOLD HIMSELF. HIS PEG HOLES ARE ALL OVER THE PLACE!



LATER...

SO THAT'S IT, EH? BLAST BEN! WE WANT NO INTERFERENCE WITH WHAT WE'RE GOIN' TO DO WITH THAT PEGLEG.

\$30,000 IN GOLD! - AN' ALL MINE! NOW I CAN RETIRE LIKE I ALWAYS DREAMED...



OKAY, STICK. BEN'S CAUGHT A BELLYFULL!

(GASP!)...S-STICK! WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

YORE GETTIN' BRANDED TO DEATH UNLESS YUH TELL US WHERE YUH HID THAT GOLD BOX!



NO-NO! --I'LL TELL! I HID IT IN QUIET CANYON, D-DON'T TOUCH ME --I'LL TAKE YUH THERE!

OKAY, LOLO, KEEP THE BRAND HANDY IN CASE PEGLEG CHANGES HIS MIND.

WE SCARED THE CRIPPLE, ALL RIGHT! HERE'S THE GOLD!

AN' HERE'S YORE PAYOFF FOR THE DOUBLE-CROSS...

NO! YOU'LL KILL ALL OF US! THE SHOTS WILL DISTURB THEM ROCKS UP THERE AN' CAUSE AN AVALANCHE! THAT'S WHY THEY CALL THIS "QUIET CANYON"!



THINK WE'D FALL FOR A GAG LIKE THAT? BLAST HIM, LOLO!

STICK - IT'S ON THE LEVEL! LOOK!!



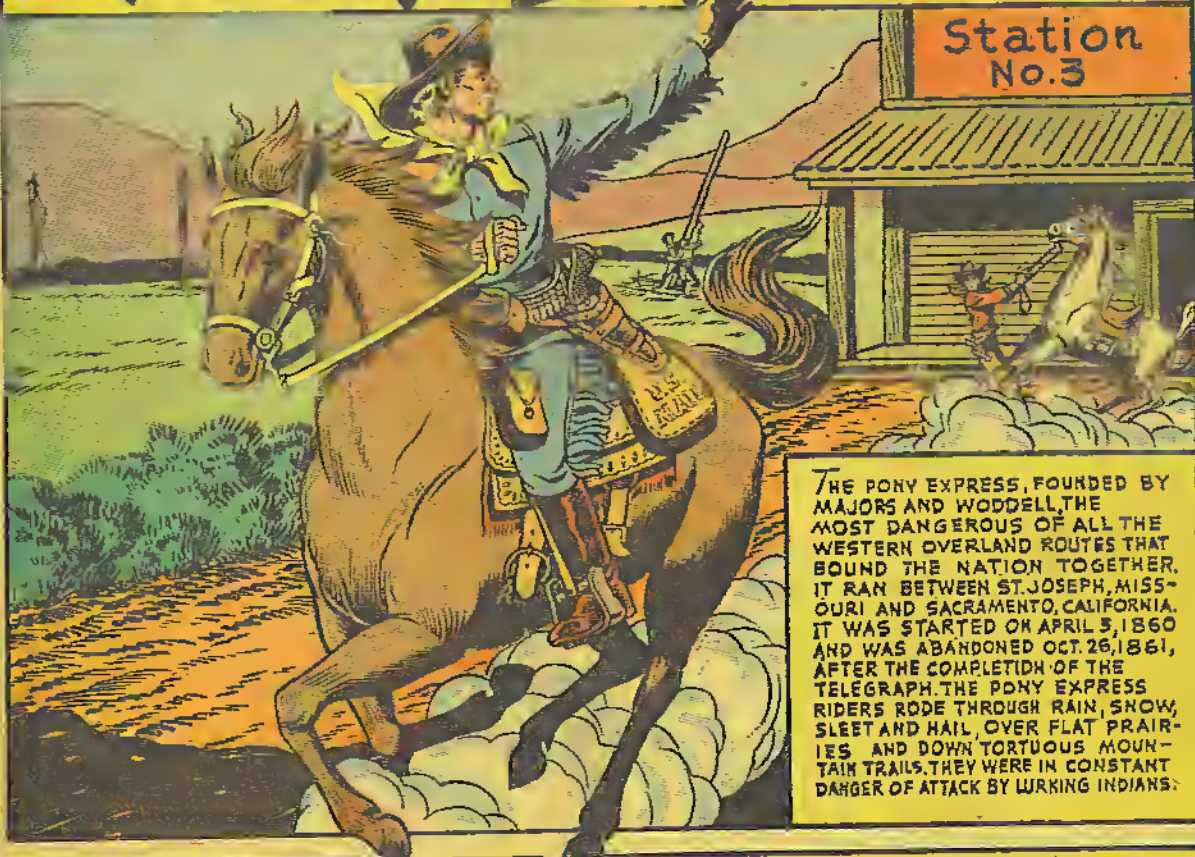
DESPITE SCREAMS, DEATH DESCENDS IN A RAIN OF COLD, MERCILESS ROCK. THEY FOUND THE STAGE COACH, THEY FOUND BEN... EVERYTHING BUT THE SECRET THAT SLEEPS FOREVER UNDER TONS OF SILENT ROCK IN - **QUIET CANYON.**



TRUTH *not* FANCY

Pony Express

Shutling
12 30 40



THE PONY EXPRESS, FOUNDED BY MAJORS AND WOODDELL, THE MOST DANGEROUS OF ALL THE WESTERN OVERLAND ROUTES THAT BOUND THE NATION TOGETHER, IT RAN BETWEEN ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI AND SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA. IT WAS STARTED ON APRIL 3, 1860 AND WAS ABANDONED OCT. 26, 1861, AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE TELEGRAPH. THE PONY EXPRESS RIDERS RODE THROUGH RAIN, SNOW, SLEET AND HAIL, OVER FLAT PRAIRIES AND DOWN TORTUOUS MOUNTAIN TRAILS. THEY WERE IN CONSTANT DANGER OF ATTACK BY WICKING INDIANS.

LATER, THE TRAILS THEY MADE WERE FOLLOWED BY THE COVERED WAGONS OF SETTLERS.



IN 1873, THE EAST AND WEST WERE CONNECTED BY RAIL.



TODAY, IT TAKES BUT A FEW HOURS TO SPAN THE CONTINENT.



KIT WEST

in "MURDER IN THE STOCKADE"



ONE SATURDAY NIGHT AT FORT GRESHAM, THERE IS MUCH CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION...

CONGRATULATIONS, DAN. YOU'RE GETTING A LOVELY BRIDE IN MARY JANE.

JUST FOR THAT, KIT, I'LL LET DAN DANCE WITH YOU-- A PRIVILEGE I HAVE REFUSED EVERY OTHER GIRL TONIGHT.



I'M GLAD EVERYBODY'S HAVING A GOOD TIME, DAN.

NOT EVERYBODY, KIT. TAKE AUNT TILLY, FOR INSTANCE. SHE NEVER GOT MARRIED AND HATES WHEN ANYBODY ELSE DOES.



AND YOU WOULDN'T CALL SAILOR BEN HAPPY EITHER. WOMEN HATE HIM BECAUSE HE'S SO UGLY.

POOR BEN. HE'S MISSED A LOT IN LIFE.



AS FOR INJUN TOM... I'VE NEVER SEEN HIM SMILE AT ANYTHING, LET ALONE A WEDDING CELEBRATION.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HIM, DAN. HE'S THE ONLY INJUN IN THE FORT. HE'S LONELY, THAT'S ALL.



THANKS FOR LENDING DAN OUT, MARY JANE. I HOPE HE IS AS GOOD A HUSBAND AS HE IS A DANCER!

THE DANCE WENT ON UNTIL MIDNIGHT, BUT NOT AN EYE WAS OFF THE HAPPY BRIDE AND GROOM.

THE HUSSY! SMILING JUST BECAUSE SHE SNARED A MAN!

MAN-STEALER!

YOU'RE FORGETTING HELEN DREW. NO GIRL LIKES BEING JILTED AT THE LAST MINUTE.

TOO BAD, BUT WHEN I SAW MARY JANE, I COULDN'T BEAR THE SIGHT OF HELEN ANY MORE THAT'S LOVE!



I SHALL KILL MARY JANE WITH KINDNESS, SHALL WE DANCE, DEAR?



NO FEMALE EVER SMILED AT ME! I'M TOO UGLY. (CHOKES!)...



GOOD NIGHT, DEAREST.

OH, DAN, I CAN HARDLY WAIT TILL NOON TOMORROW WHEN WE TAKE OUR VOWS.



ONE MORE NIGHT AND I'LL BE DAN WAYNE'S WIFE... THE HANDSOMEST MAN IN FORT GRESHAM! (SIGH!)



HMM-- IT MUST BE WONDERFUL TO BE MARRIED TO A MAN YOU LOVE... SOME DAY I SUPPOSE I, TOO, WILL MEET THE RIGHT MAN.



TWO HOURS LATER -- IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT...



TWO BRUTAL HANDS STRANGLE A HALF-GASPED CRY...



THE NEXT MORNING...

THAT'S STRANGE, I'VE BEEN KNOCKING ON MARY JANE'S DOOR ALL MORNING, BUT SHE STILL DOESN'T ANSWER!

MAYBE SHE'S ILL. FORCE THE DOOR!



GREAT GUNS! L-LOOK!!

CRASH-H-



MARY JANE WAS CHOKED TO DEATH.

BUT, DOCTOR, HOW COULD ANYONE GET IN? THE DOOR WAS BOLTED FROM THE INSIDE!

PERHAPS THE KILLER ENTERED THROUGH THE WINDOW...



DID YOU KNOW ONE OF MARY'S SHOES WAS MISSING MR. DRAKE?

YES, I DID. MARY SAID IT DISAPPEARED A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO.

WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT, KIT? WHO'D WANT TO MURDER THAT POOR CHILD ON THE EVE OF HER WEDDING?

SEVERAL PEOPLE, I IMAGINE.

BUT, KIT, LOOK HOW FAR AWAY THAT OTHER HOUSE AND THAT WALL ARE!

YES, IT'S A STUNT, BUT NOT FOR SOMEONE WHO'S VERY AGILE...



CAN'T SAY I'M SORRY, KIT - THE GIRL WOULDN'T LOOK AT ME. TOO GRUESOME FOR HER, I GUESS. THERE AIN'T A LASS FROM BARBARY TO RIO WHO EVER CAST A SMILE AT SAILOR BEN. THAT'S A RECORD, AIN'T IT?



YOU'RE THE ONE GAL I RESPECT, KIT - 'CAUSE YOU DO A MAN'S WORK. HERE, HAVE A CHAW O' TOBACCO!



NIX, BEN - I'M NOT MAN ENOUGH FOR THAT. BUT I'D GET RID OF THAT WOMAN-HATING HABIT, BEN. AFTER MARY JANE'S DEATH, PEOPLE WON'T LIKE HEARING YOUR OPINIONS.

TALK POLITE TO A SAVAGE, WILL YOU? LOOK AT THIS - MARY JANE'S MISSING SHOE!



WAIT! MAYBE OLD SQUAW HERSELF BRING-SHOE HERE! OLD SQUAW HATE ALL YOUNG SQUAW. SO SHE KILL, BLAME ON INJUN TOM BECAUSE HE IS INJUN!



ME KNOW NOTHIN! ME GO SLEEP LAST NIGHT. ME GOOD INJUN!

WHY WASTE TIME ASKIN' THE RED DEVIL QUESTIONS? SEARCH HIS HOUSE!

LET'S NOT ACCUSE WILDLY AUNT TILDY. MIND IF WE LOOK INSIDE YOUR SHED, TOM?



GOOD HEAVENS!

ME NOT KNOW HOW IT GET THERE!

A WEEK LATER

FOLKS, I'VE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE, HELEN DREW AND I ARE GOING TO BE MARRIED TOMORROW AT NOON.



YOU LYING DEVIL! DON'T THINK THE WHOLE FORT WON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS BY NIGHTFALL!

HMM - MAYBE THE SHOE WAS A PLANT, TOM!



HOW CAN DAN COURT HELEN DREW, THE GIRL HE JILTED FOR MARY JANE, WITH HIS FIANCEE HARDLY COLD IN HER GRAVE?

LOVE IS THE BIGGEST MYSTERY O' ALL, DOC.



WHAT? ONLY TWO WEEKS AFTER MARY JANE'S DEATH!

DAN FOUND IT WAS ME HE LOVED ALL ALONG!



WHO MISSES HELEN DREW ANYWAY? THE HUSSY PUT ON TOO MANY AIRS!

GOOD RIDDANCE, SAY I!

DAN SEEMS TO HAVE RECOVERED FROM HIS SORROW NOW HE'S RUSHING MOLLY KEAN.

I'M DISAPPOINTED IN DAN. THE HORRIBLE DEATHS OF HIS LAST TWO FIANCEES DOESN'T SEEM TO STOP HIM.

NOR THE GIRLS! DAN'S TOO HANDSOME FOR THEM TO RESIST. HE TURNS THEIR HEADS.



HE HUNTS THEIR HEADS, MORE LIKELY! I ONCE HEARD OF A SAILOR WHO KILLED EVERY LASS HE WAS SCHEDULED TO MARRY, HE JUST WANTED TO SEE HOW MANY HE COULD COURT AND WIN! HE WAS THAT VAIN.

HMM-I NEVER CONSIDERED THAT ANGLE-



FOLKS, MOLLY KEAN BEING AN ORPHAN, ASKED ME TO SAY SHE WILL WED DAN WAYNE NEXT SUNDAY IN THIS CHAPEL. WE ALL CONGRATULATE THEM AND WISH THEM WELL.



THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY NIGHT...

IT'S OUTRAGEOUS THE WAY THESE GIRLS RUN AFTER DAN WAYNE! YOU'D THINK IT WAS HORRIBLE TO BE A SPINSTER!

THESE FRILLS ALL RUN AFTER A HANDSOME FACE. WOT'S UGLY FOLKS TO DO - COMMIT SUICIDE?



FEW HOURS LATER --

THE KILLER ALWAYS ENTERS THROUGH THE WINDOW. I'LL STAND GUARD AND SEE IF THE JINX APPLIES TO MOLLY KEAN TOO!

MEDDLING FOOL! SHE NEEDS A LESSON!



BE GLAD I HAVEN'T KILLED YOU, MEDDLER!



N-NO! NO! STAY AWAY!



THE NEXT MORNING -



AGAIN THE MISSING-SHOE, KIT! SHALL WE PAY INJUN TOM A VISIT?

WHOEVER CAME THROUGH THIS WINDOW MUST BE AGILE AS A SQUIRREL - IT'S SOME LEAP FROM THE WALL TO THIS CABIN, BUT THAT WAS NO SQUIRREL WHO TAPPED ME ON THE HEAD!



HERE'S THE SHOE AGAIN! KILL THE MURDERING-DEVIL!

NO! ARREST HIM BUT HE MUST HAVE A FAIR TRIAL!



AND YOU DON'T THINK THE KILLER IS INJUN TOM?

NO - I'M SUSPICIOUS OF ANY BRIDE-GROOM WHO HAS SUCH BAD LUCK WITH HIS BRIDES-TO-BE! ANYHOW, I'M GOING TO CARRY OUT A LITTLE PLAN OF MY OWN...

GAOL



THAT NIGHT

HERE'S WHERE I GET MYSELF A HUSBAND! A WHIFF OF PERFUME... A BIT OF SPICE TO ONE'S COSTUME... ENOUGH BAIT TO TRAP A KILLER!

OH, DAN, DEAR -



DAN, I'VE HAD MY EYES ON YOU FOR AGES - BUT YOU NEVER GAVE ME A TUMBLE - YOU WERE COURTING SOMEBODY ELSE ALL THE TIME, AM I SO HARD TO TAKE?

GOSH, KIT, I NEVER THOUGHT YOU COULD BE LIKE THIS!



A WEEK PASSES - A WEEK FULL OF KISSES AND GLOWERING GLANCES, WE'LL BE MARRIED NEXT SUNDAY, MY DARLING.

OH, DAN, DEAR, THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN HOPING YOU'D SAY!



OHO! ONE SHOE MISSING! WELL, IT COULD BE ANYBODY. I HAVEN'T CHECKED ON MY WARDROBE SINCE YESTERDAY

BANG!



INJUN TOM BUSTED OUT OF THE GAOL, KIT, AN' DISAPPEARED. BETTER WATCH OUT, YOU GITTIN' MARRIED TOMORROW.

I WILL, HIRAM.

WITH A RIFLE IN MY HAND!

HOURS PASS. SUDDENLY, A HEAVY THUD ON THE ROOF, THE WINDOW IS PUSHED OPEN AND -

THIS TIME, THE BRIDE'S READY FOR THE BRIDE-KILLER!



GOOD HEAVENS! AN ORANG-UTAN!

BANG!

THAT APE ACCOUNTS FOR THE AGILITY - AND THE MISSING SHOE. THE KILLER STOLE A SHOE FROM EACH OF THE VICTIMS TO GIVE THE ANIMAL THE SCENT OF THE PREY.



BEN, I WANT NO TROUBLE WITH YOU. A MURDERING ORANG-UTAN RAN INTO YOUR CABIN AND I INTEND TO FIND HIM - SO, ONE SIDE!

YOU'RE BALMY, KIT! WHAT'S AN ORANG-UTAN DOIN' SO FAR FROM AFRICA?



YOU'RE THE BOY TO EXPLAIN THAT, BEN! THIS BLOOD TRAIL LEADS RIGHT UP TO YOUR SEA-CHEST! WHAT ARE THE HOLES IN IT FOR, BEN?

WHY DON'T YOU LOOK FOR YOURSELF, KIT?



THE NEXT BULLET'S FOR YOU, BEN! WANT IT?

YOU WIN, KIT - BLAST YOU!



SAILOR BEN HATED WOMEN. HIS SOLE COMPANION WAS THIS DEAD APE THAT HE KEPT DOPED WITH THIS OPIUM. HE ROUSED THE BEAST IN ORDER TO KILL!



SORRY, DAN, FOR SUSPECTING YOU, BUT YOU DID LOOK SUSPICIOUS!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, KIT. NEXT TIME, WE WON'T DO ANY ANNOUNCING... WE'LL JUST ELOPE EH, MABEL?



DEATH'S Tales of the Silent Spaces DOUBLE DOOM!

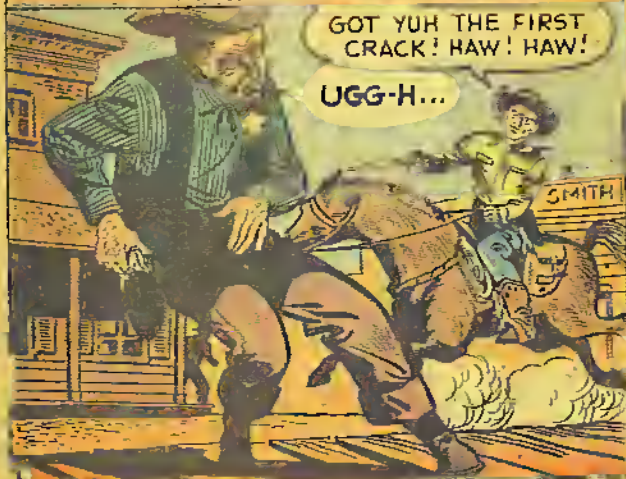


HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE JAILED FOR ANOTHER MAN'S CRIMES? HOW WOULD YOU FACE DEATH AND DISGRACE - JUST BECAUSE YOU LOOKED SO MUCH LIKE SOMEONE ELSE? FLIP CARSON WAS AN EASY-GOING YOUNG-RANCHER... UNTIL THEY HUNG A NOOSE AROUND HIS NECK AND TOLD HIM HE FACED...
"DEATH'S DOUBLE DOOM"

MAX REINMAN

CP. 6

SIXGUNS BLAZING, CACTUS KENT FLEES THE TOWN OF SUNSET... ADDING MURDER TO THE CRIME OF ROBBERY...



GOT YUH THE FIRST CRACK! HAW! HAW!

UGG-H...

SMITH

NOT SATISFIED WITH ROBBIN' THE WAGONWHEEL SALOON, HE SHOT SHERIFF DAN'S DEPUTY DOWN IN COLD BLOOD, THE MURDERIN' COYOTE!



SOME MILES AWAY, IN THE LITTLE TOWN OF BROKEN LANCE...

CACTUS!
I RECKONED YUH
WERE OVER IN
SUNSET, SPARKIN'
MISS BETSY!

YUH MADE A
MISTAKE, FRIEND.
I'M FLIP CARSON
OF THE C BAR
RANCH. SORRY!

HMM... THAT
RANNY LOOKS
ENOUGH LIKE
CACTUS TO BE
HIS TWIN. AN'
THAT SURE GIVES
ME AN IDEA!

WHA--?

HAW! HAW!
FOOLED YUH
THAT TIME, JED!
I GOT NEWS FOR
THE BOYS...

RACK
CRACK!

I'LL STAND TO
DRINKS! I JUST ROBBED
THE SALOON OVER IN
SUNSET AN' GUNNED
THEIR SHERIFF'S DEPUTY!

YUH
ALWAYS WERE
TOO QUICK WITH
THEM COLTS!

AS CACTUS KENT STALKS INTO THE SALOON, JED CONNER DROPS A CASUAL HAND TO HIS GUNBUTT. AND THEN, IN FULL VIEW OF CACTUS' OUTLAW GANG...

YUH GONE LOCO, JED?
YUH SHOT CACTUS!

LISTEN TO
ME, YUH
OWLHOOTS...

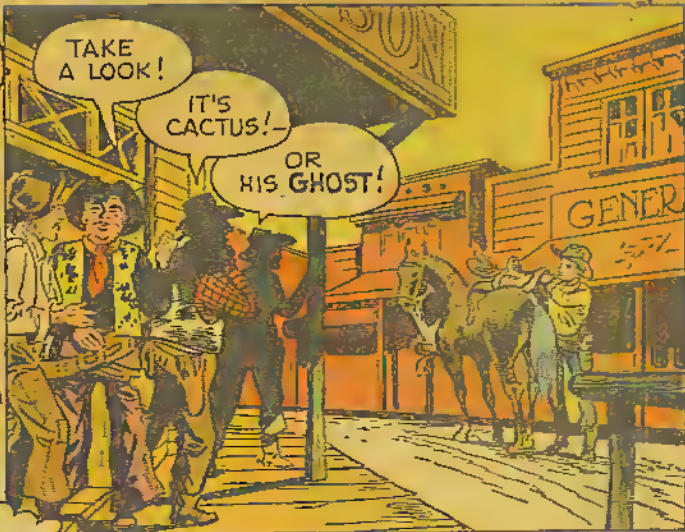
BANG!
BANG

CACTUS WAS TOO ALMIGHTY
QUICK WITH THEM COLTS. HE
COME NEAR MISSIN' MY HAT
AN' GETTIN' ME OUTSIDE.
WITH CACTUS OUT OF
THE WAY... WE GOT
HIS LOOT! BETTER-
WE CAN COLLECT A
REWARD FOR HIM!



HOW CAN WE
GET A REWARD
FOR A DEAD
CACTUS KENT?

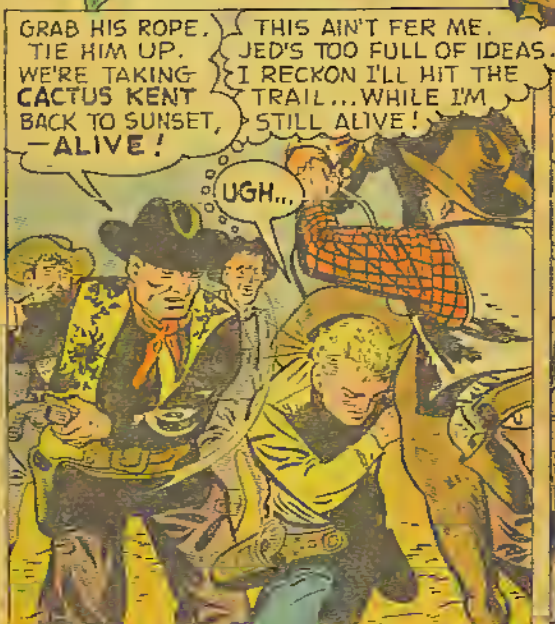
TOM, YUH WORRY
TOO MUCH! I'LL
SHOW YUH A REAL
WALKIN', TALKIN'
CACTUS!



TAKE
A LOOK!

IT'S
CACTUS!—

OR
HIS GHOST!



GRAB HIS ROPE.
TIE HIM UP.
WE'RE TAKING
CACTUS KENT
BACK TO SUNSET,
—ALIVE!

THIS AIN'T FER ME.
JED'S TOO FULL OF IDEAS.
I RECKON I'LL HIT THE
TRAIL... WHILE I'M
STILL ALIVE!

UGH...



HOURS LATER, A DAZED FLIP CARSON
FACES A MADDENED CROWD...

STRING
'IM UP!

DON'T
GIVE HIM
NO CHANCE
TO USE THEM
GUNS!

STAND ASIDE,
SHERIFF!

I-I'LL LEAVE
HIM WITH
YOU, CONLEY.
I'LL COME BACK
FOR THE REWARD.



BUT I AIN'T
CACTUS KENT... I
TELL YUH I'M FLIP CARSON!
DON'T ANYBODY KNOW
ME HERE IN
SUNSET?

YOU ROBBED
MY STORE!

YOU SHOT
MY HUSBAND,
YOU—YOU MAD
KILLER!



HOLD ON,
THAR! KENT
IS MY
PRISONER.
STAND BACK,
OR I'LL SHOOT!

LET 'IM
DANCE
ON AIR!

LYNCH THE
THIEVIN'
KILLER!

LYNCH HIM!
LYNCH HIM!

GIT IN THAR, YUH
COYOTE! I DON'T HOLD
NO BRIEF WITH LYNCHIN'
—BUT I'M ALL FER GIVIN'
YUH WHAT'S COMIN'
TO YUH!

BUT I—I'M
NOT KENT...
WON'T
ANYONE
BELIEVE
ME?

SICK AND FRIGHTENED, YOUNG FLIP CARSON Huddles
IN A JAIL COT, LISTENING TO THE WHISKEY—
MADDENED VOICES IN THE STREET OUTSIDE...

WAIT'LL THE
SHERIFF GOES
HOME!

THEM
DOORS'LL
BUST IF
WE SLAM
'EM WITH
A LOG!

GOT TO DO
SOMETHING...
BUT WHAT?

MEANWHILE, BETSY CONLEY REINS IN HER HORSE
AT THE BROKEN LANCE SALOON, AND
SWINGS FROM THE SADDLE...

TOM! I HEARD
CACTUS WAS
IN TROUBLE!

YUH HEARD
WRONG, MISS
BETSY. CACTUS
IS DAID—
JED SHOT
HIM!

JED TOOK
ANOTHER FELLER OVER
TO SUNSET AS CACTUS. A
DAID RINGER FOR HIM. FELLER
BY THE NAME OF FLIP CARSON.
I'M TELLIN' YUH THIS BECAUSE
I'M PULLIN STAKES... I
DON'T WANT TO BE TOLD
WHAT TO DO BY JED CONNER!

I HAVE TO
SAVE HIM. I
CAN'T LET HIM
DIE...

DAD, THAT
MAN INSIDE
IS INNOCENT!
CACTUS KENT
IS DEAD!

BETSY, YUH MUST HAVE
BEEN EATIN' LOCO WEED!
I TELL YUH IT IS CACTUS!

TAKE A LOOK!
IS THET HIM?

YES! I MEAN...
OH, I DON'T KNOW!
TOM SAID HIS NAME
IS FLIP CARSON!



THAT NIGHT, AS MEN GRADUALLY WORK
THEMSELVES UP TO A "NECKTIE-PARTY" MOOD,
A SLIM FIGURE CREEPS ALONG THE BOARD-
WALK IN FRON OF SUNSET'S LITTLE JAIL ...

WE'LL SHTRING HIM SO
HIGH-HIC-TH' VULTURES'LL
FIND 'IM EASHY!

OH, I
HOPE I'M
IN TIME!

THASH'
RIGHT-
-HIC!



HERE'S A
GUN, COWBOY.
I'LL LET YOU OUT.
THE REST IS...
UP TO YOU!

MISS BETSY...
YUH SURE
ARE AN
ANGEL!



I'LL BE BACK...
WITH PROOF I'M NOT
CACTUS KENT!



JAILBREAK!
JAILBREAK!

KENT'S
GETTIN'
AWAY!



YUH AIN'T DRAGGIN'
ME BACK THERE!
GIT OUTTA
MY WAY!

UGGH!

GNYAA!



SAFELY FREE OF
THE TOWN, FLIP
CARSON DRAWS
REIN AND PONDER'S...

I OUGHT TO RIDE UP
NORTH, THEN I'D BE
SAFE! BUT I CAN'T
FORGET THAT GIRL...
AND WHAT SHE DID
FOR ME. IF I RAN
AWAY...I'D BE LETTIN'
HER
DOWN!



SOME HOURS LATER, IN BROKEN LANCE ...

DRINKS ARE ON ME, BOYS! I'M TREATIN'!



A SHOT RINGS OUT IN THE CROWDED ROOM! A GLASS SHATTERS ...WHISKEY SPLASHES!!



A WEIRD FIGURE SWAYS IN THE DOORWAY! BLOOD-STAINED CLOTHES REEK WITH THE DAMPNESS OF THE GRAVE!

CACTUS!

I COME BACK FOR YUH, JED. I CLAWED MY WAY FROM THE GROUND WHERE YUH BURIED ME TO FIND YUH!



WE'RE GOIN' TO TAKE A RIDE, BOYS. I KINDA MISSED YUH WHERE I WAS... ALL ALONE IN THET GRAVE!

SU-SURE, CACTUS! D-DON'T SHOOT... WE'RE RI-RIDIN' WITH YUH!



AFTER THE JAIL DOORS CLOSE AND LOCK BEHIND JED AND HIS GANG...

SHERIFF DAN CONLEY WHIRLS AS HEAVY BOOTS STAMP OUTSIDE HIS LITTLE JAIL. SOMETIME LATER, HIS FACE BLANCHES AS HE WATCHES GRIM-FACED MEN MOVE INTO HIS LITTLE ROOM...

HERE YUH ARE, SHERIFF, THE MEN WHO KILLED ME! TALK, YUH COYOTES!

I-I KILLED CACTUS... SWAPPED MEN ON YUH... BROUGHT IN A DAID RINGER FER CACTUS NAMED FLIP CARSON...



YOU...YOU'RE THE RANCHER... FLIP CARSON!

WHY, SURE, I RECKONED IF JED THOUGHT I LOOKED SO MUCH LIKE CACTUS, I'D BE CACTUS... LONG ENOUGH TO SCARE THE LIVIN' DAYLIGHTS OUTTA THEM RANNIES... AND GET 'EM TO CONFESS!



THE END

TRUTH *not* FANCY

Will Rogers A Great American

Not Filled
11-15-41

WILL ROGERS IN THE
"Ziegfield Follies."

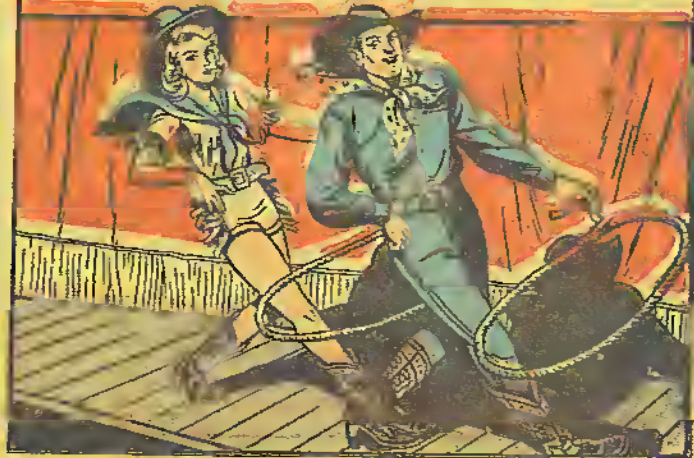
WILL ROGERS, AMONG OUR GREAT-
EST HUMORISTS STARTED THE
FAD OF WISECRACKING WHILE DO-
ING HIS ROPE TRICKS. HE WAS BORN
IN 1879 AND KILLED IN AN AIRPLANE
ACCIDENT, IN ALASKA, IN 1935.



ONE OF HIS GREAT ROLES WAS THAT
OF THE SMALL TOWN EDITOR IN THE
FILM "LIFE BEGINS AT 40"



TODAY, THERE ARE MANY WHO MAKE
THEIR LIVING, IMITATING WILL ROGERS.







WHAT'S GOING ON
HERE?--STOP BEATING
THAT INDIAN!

HEY--
SOMEBODY'S
GETTIN' NOSEY!



I'LL--
UUUH!!

MUSTN'T
PLAY WITH
GUNS!



HERE'S SOMETHING
ELSE TO
CONVINCE YOU!

IT'S A
GOVERNMENT
AGENT!

OW-W



I'D TAKE
AFTER THOSE
VARMINTS BUT
THIS FELLOW
SEEMS TO NEED
SOME ATTENTION!



WHY DID
THOSE MEN
ATTACK YOU?
I'M A
FRIEND...

MAYBE FUR
SKINS... MANY
ATTACKS ON INDIANS
BY WHITE MAN
FROM TOWN. WAR
DRUMS WILL
ANSWER FOR
INDIAN!



TAKE ME TO
YOUR CHIEF!

THIS WAY...
CAMP IN
HILLS.



AND SOON...

I'M TOLD
WHITE MEN
FROM TOWN
BREAK THE
PEACE WITH
YOUR PEOPLE.

I CANNOT
STOP MY
PEOPLE FROM
WARRING.
THEY ARE
ANGRY!

BUT WHY BLAME THE TOWNSPEOPLE, CHIEF, IT MAY NOT BE THEY WHO ATTACK YOUR PEOPLE.

THESE WERE FOUND AT THE SCENE OF THE ATTACKS. THEY ARE FROM TOWNSPEOPLE.

HMM... A TOWN NEWSPAPER AND A TOBACCO POUCH WITH THE INITIALS J.B. LET ME TAKE THESE THINGS WITH ME, CHIEF. I PROMISE TO STOP THE ATTACKS ON YOUR PEOPLE.

AND SOON AFTER, REX FOSTER CALLS THE TOWNS-PEOPLE TO-GETHER--

...AND AS GOVERNMENT AGENT FOR THIS REGION, I WARN YOU, TROOPS CANNOT BE SENT QUICKLY ENOUGH TO PREVENT AN INDIAN MASSACRE.

YOU PEOPLE MUST STOP ATTACKING THE INDIANS. THEY WILL GO ON THE WARPATH, I WARN YOU!!

BUT WE AIN'T BOTHERIN' THE INDIANS NONE, WE SHORE DON'T WANT TO BE MASSACRED!

ALL RIGHT... IT'S UP TO YOU TO KEEP PEACE WITH THE TRIBES, I'VE HAD MY SAY NOW!

BUT AS THE CROWD DISPERSES...

THERES ONE OF THE THREE THAT I CAUGHT BEATING THAT INDIAN!

REMAINING UNSEEN, REX FOSTER TRAILS THE MAN TO...

THERE HE GOES... INTO THAT OLD BARN...



I'LL LOOK THROUGH ONE OF THE CRACKS IN THIS OLD WOOD.

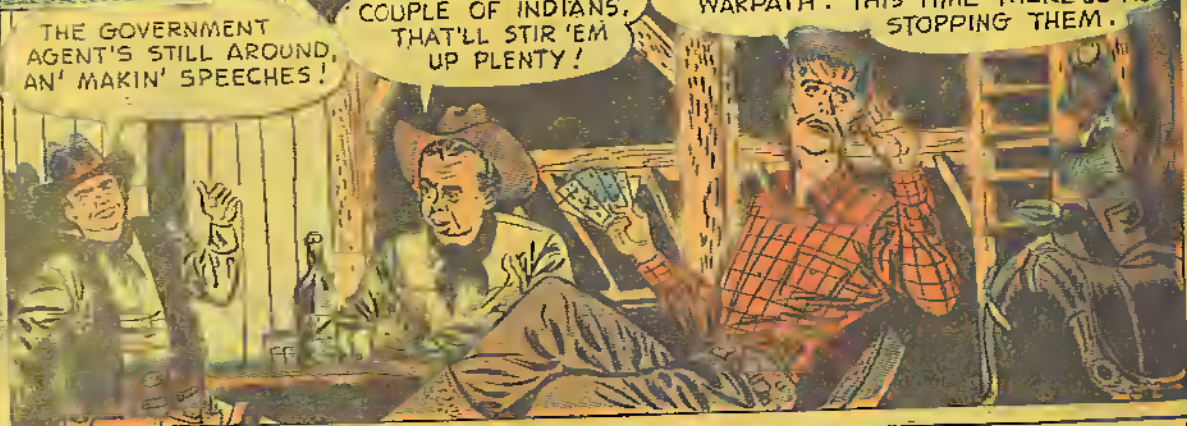


AND INSIDE THE BARN...

THE GOVERNMENT AGENT'S STILL AROUND, AN' MAKIN' SPEECHES!

HE'S TOO LATE, WE JEST KILLED A COUPLE OF INDIANS, THAT'LL STIR 'EM UP PLENTY!

WAIT - LISTEN! HEAR THAT -- WAR DRUMS! THEY'VE HIT THE WARPATH! THIS TIME THERE'LL NO STOPPING THEM.



WE BETTER MOVE FAST! GIT YUH GEAR TOGETHER!

LET'S GIT OUTTA TOWN!



AND OUTSIDE, REX FOSTER ALSO GOES INTO ACTION --!

I'LL TAKE CARE OF THOSE VARMINTS! I HOPE THIS WORKS...



A MINUTE LATER...

C'MON -- THE HORSES ARE OUT IN FRONT..LET'S GIT!





HURRY--
OOPS !!

HEY!



THAT'S THE ONLY
TRIP YOU BOYS
ARE TAKING !

WHA-
OUCH!

OOOFH!



OOOPS!-
I'LL FIX
YUH THIS
TIME...!

GOING TO
PLAY WITH
GUNS AGAIN,
EH ...?



YOU'LL HAVE
TO BE FASTER
THAN THAT.

OOH...
MUH WRIST!



NOW TO GET THESE
VARMINTS TO THE
CROSSROADS BEFORE
THE INDIANS DESCEND
ON TOWN, I'LL BORROW
A WAGON FROM THE
A...



AND SOON--

THE INDIANS WILL
HAVE TO PASS HERE
TO REACH TOWN.



HERE THEY COME ... REALLY
ON THE WARPATH !

BEFORE THE BRAVE FIGURE, THE INDIANS COME TO A HALT ...

SPEAK QUICKLY - AND WITHOUT FORKED TONGUE!

THESE ARE THE MEN WHO HAVE MADE TROUBLE BETWEEN OUR PEOPLES. I HAVE A PROOF!



THESE THINGS YOU FOUND AFTER EACH ATTACK ... YOU'LL SEE THE INITIALS ON THIS TOBACCO POUCH ARE THE SAME AS THOSE ON THE ONE'S SPURS. THE GUN BELONGS TO THE FELLOW WITH THE EMPTY HOLSTER.



AND THIS HAT FITS THE THIRD ONE -- SEE? THEY PURPOSELY LEFT THESE THINGS AT THE SCENE OF EACH ATTACK!

THEY DRAW FALSE TRAIL TO THE TOWNSPEOPLE. I SEE NOW THAT IS OLD INDIAN TRICK!



WHY WERE YOU STIRRING UP TROUBLE? START TALKING OR I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CHIEF!

NO-NO--I'LL TALK. WE WANTED THE INDIANS TO GO ON THE WARPATH SO THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO SEND TROOPS.



THE TROOPS WOULD CHASE THE TRIBES FAR BACK INTO THE HILLS, THAT WOULD LEAVE THE RICH FUR-TRAPPING-LAND WHERE THEY NOW LIVE, FREE FOR ANYBODY!

YOU'VE HEARD THEIR CONFESSION, CHIEF. THEIR PLAN HAS FAILED, THERE WILL BE PEACE.

YES--THERE WILL BE PEACE!



AND SO, LATER, THE VILLAINS JAILED, REX FOSTER RIDES SLOWLY OFF OVER THE PRAIRIE WHERE NOW ONLY THE SMOKE OF INDIAN CAMPFIRES RISES IN THE SILENT DUSK -



THE END!

WHITE BROTHER

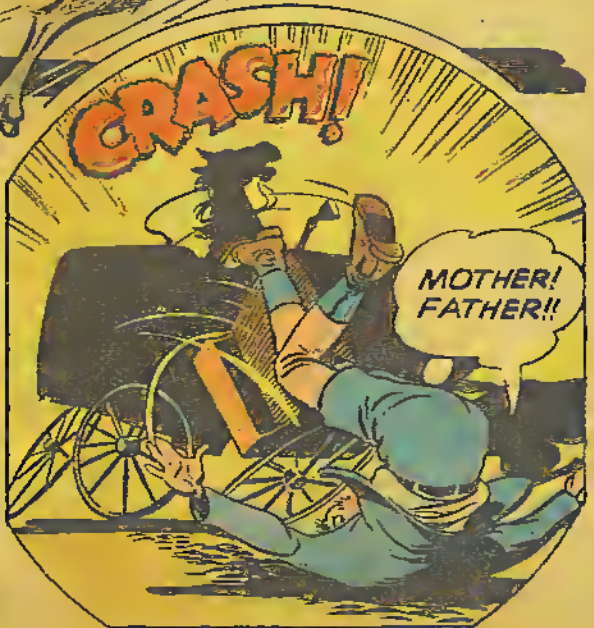
The OMINOUS CRY OF "MAD DOG" STARTS A TRAGIC CHAIN OF EVENTS IN THE NEWLY SPROUTED CITY OF KANSAS, MISSOURI...THE YEAR WAS 1881...AND THE PATHETIC WHINNY OF A HORSE IN PAIN...WAS TO SOUND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW KIND OF LIFE FOR JAMES CARROL, JR.!



EASY, STAR... EASY!

THE PAIN MADDENED ANIMAL BOLTS BLINDLY DOWN THE STREET...

WHOAH, STAR!! WHOAH!!



CRASH!!

MOTHER! FATHER!!

THE ASHEN ASPECT OF DEATH DESCENDS UPON THE SCENE A FEW MINUTES LATER...



THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO FOR THEM, LAD! YOU WERE LUCKY TO CLEAR THE WRECK... YOU MUST COME WITH ME!

CAN'T...CAN'T I JUST SAY GOOD-BYE TO THEM?

A FEW MONTHS LATER...

KANSAS CITY ORPHANAGE

YOU'LL BE TREATED GOOD HERE, JIM! TOO BAD NONE OF YOUR RELATIVES ARE ALIVE TO CARE FOR YOU!

I HAVE AN UNCLE IN TUCSON, ARIZONA... BUT THE AUTHORITIES HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE HIM!



HOLD ON, THERE!

JUS' A MINUTE, YOU SAND-HAIRED PRAIRIE PUP!!



UNCLE TUCK! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!!

DAGGONE IT, BOY...WITH WAMPEGO'S INJUNS CUTTIN' DOWN THE TELLYGRAPH WIRES, IT TOOK TWO WEEKS FER ME TO LEARN ABOUT YER PAW AN' MAW!---I CAME AS SOON'S I COULD!



TH' LAD'S MINE, NOW! I BROUGHT TH' CITY BOARD THESE HERE CHARACTER LETTERS AND THEY SIGNED THIS HERE RELEASE!

MR. CARROL, I'M PLEASED! JIM OESERVES THE PROPER CARE A RELATIVE CAN GIVE HIM...GOOD LUCK TO BOTH OF YOU!



COME ON, BOY! I'M TAKIN' YUH BACK TO ARIZONA TO THE GOLOARNDST BIGGEST HOMESTEADIN' PLOT O' GOOD EARTH YOU EVER OID SEE! WE'LL STOP AT TH' HOTEL FUST!

GEE, UNCLE TUCK! ARIZONA!



GET YORE HIDE
OUTTA THEM CITY SKINS
AND DRESS UP T' FIT
TH' COUNTRY YORE
GOIN' TO! A REAL
OLD INJUN FIGHTER
MADE THESE OUDS
FER YOU...CATCH!



GOLLY!
THANKS,
UNCLE
TUCK!

WOW-EE!!
A REAL
BUCKSKIN
JACKET!!

CALF, JIM...CALF!
HMM...FITS GOOD,
TOO! WELL...LET'S
GET OUR HIDES
MOVIN'! WE'VE GOT
A WAGON TRAIN
HEADIN' FER
ALBUQUERQUE
T' CATCH!



FEW
DAYS
LATER...

THERE SHE IS, JIM! SANTA FE! THEY CALL
IT THE GATEWAY TO THE WEST! SO FAR IT'S
JUST A WATERIN' HOLE! WE'LL STOP LONG
ENOUGH TO TAKE ON A U.S.A. CAVALRY SQUAD
TO PERFECT US FROM INJUNS FAR AS
ALBUQUERQUE!



GEE! BUT
WE HAVEN'T
SEEN ANY
INDIANS
YET!!

RUN ALONG 'N
SCOUT TH' TOWN,
JIM...WE'LL BE HERE
'BOUT AN HOUR!
I'LL WATER UP!

OKAY,
UNCLE
TUCK!



GOLLY! THERE'S
AN INDIAN BOY!
JUST LOOK AT
THAT SWELL PONY
HE'S RIDING!

HOLY SMOKE!

THAT'S LITTLE FEATHER...!
WAMPEGO'S SON!!

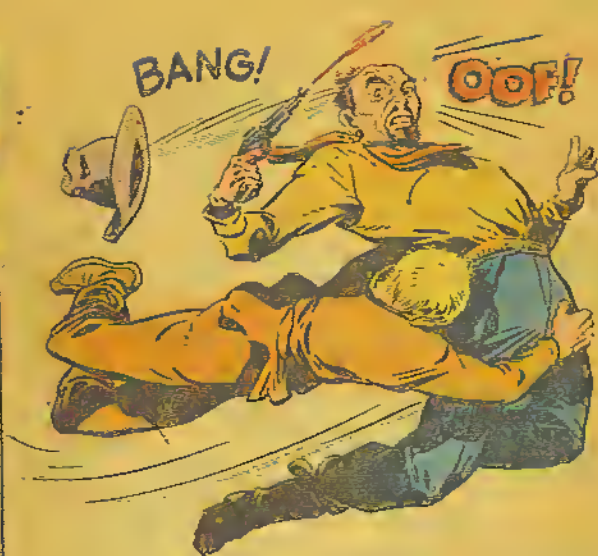
HE-HE'S
DRAWING
HIS GUN!





I'LL SEND THAT LITTLE RATTLESNAKE WHERE HE B' LONGS!

NO... DON'T SHOOT!



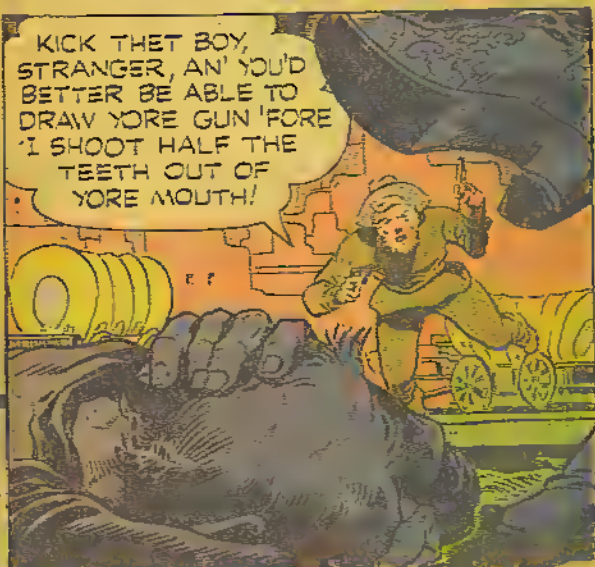
BANG!

OOF!

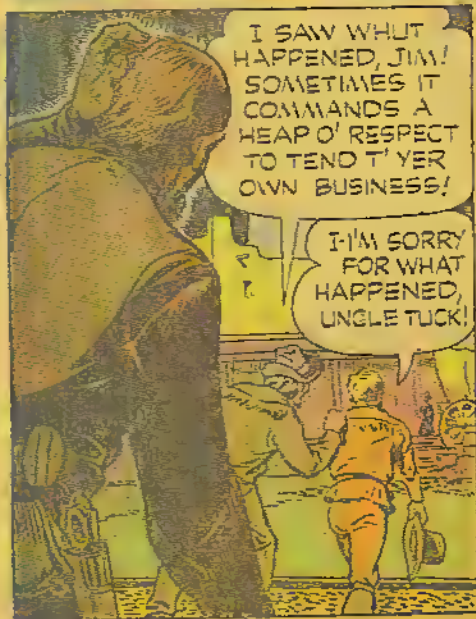


WHY, YOU LITTLE RAT! NOW THAT RED BRAT'S GALLOPING AWAY T' TELL WAMPEGO 'BOUT TH' WAGON TRAIN! I OUGHT TO...

GOSH, SIR...I-I DIDN'T KNOW...

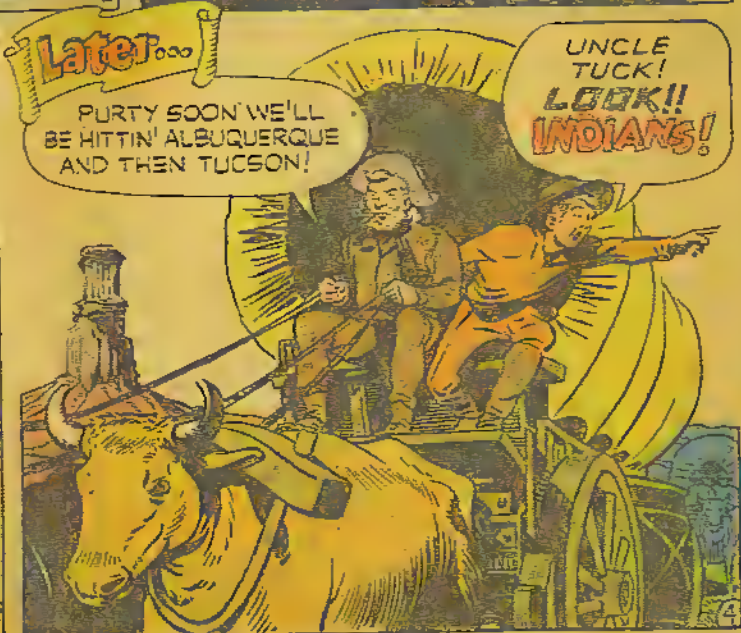


KICK THET BOY, STRANGER, AN' YOU'D BETTER BE ABLE TO DRAW YORE GUN 'FORE 'I SHOOT HALF THE TEETH OUT OF YORE MOUTH!



I SAW WHUT HAPPENED, JIM! SOMETIMES IT COMMANDS A HEAP O' RESPECT TO TEND T' YER OWN BUSINESS!

I-I'M SORRY FOR WHAT HAPPENED, UNCLE TUCK!



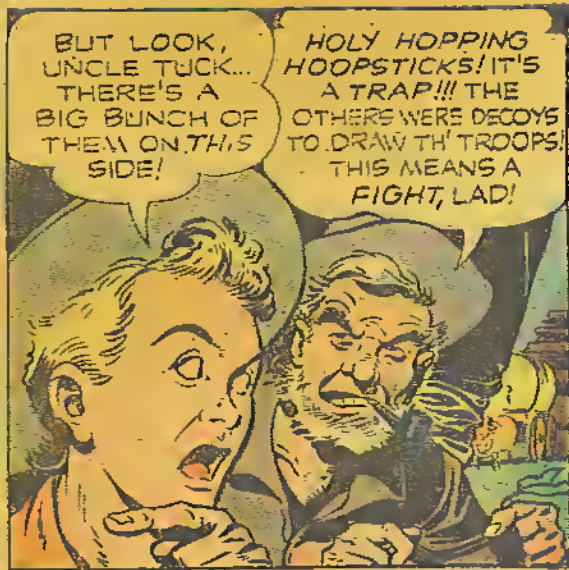
Later...

PURTY SOON 'WE'LL BE HITTIN' ALBUQUERQUE AND THEN TUCSON!

UNCLE TUCK! LOOK!! INDIANS!



HOT LICKETY-LICK!!!
LOOKIT THOSE U.S.A.
SOLDIERS GO AFTER
'EM! SEE, JIM...THAT'S
WHY THEY CAME
ALONG!



BUT LOOK,
UNCLE TUCK...
THERE'S A
BIG BUNCH OF
THEM ON THIS
SIDE!

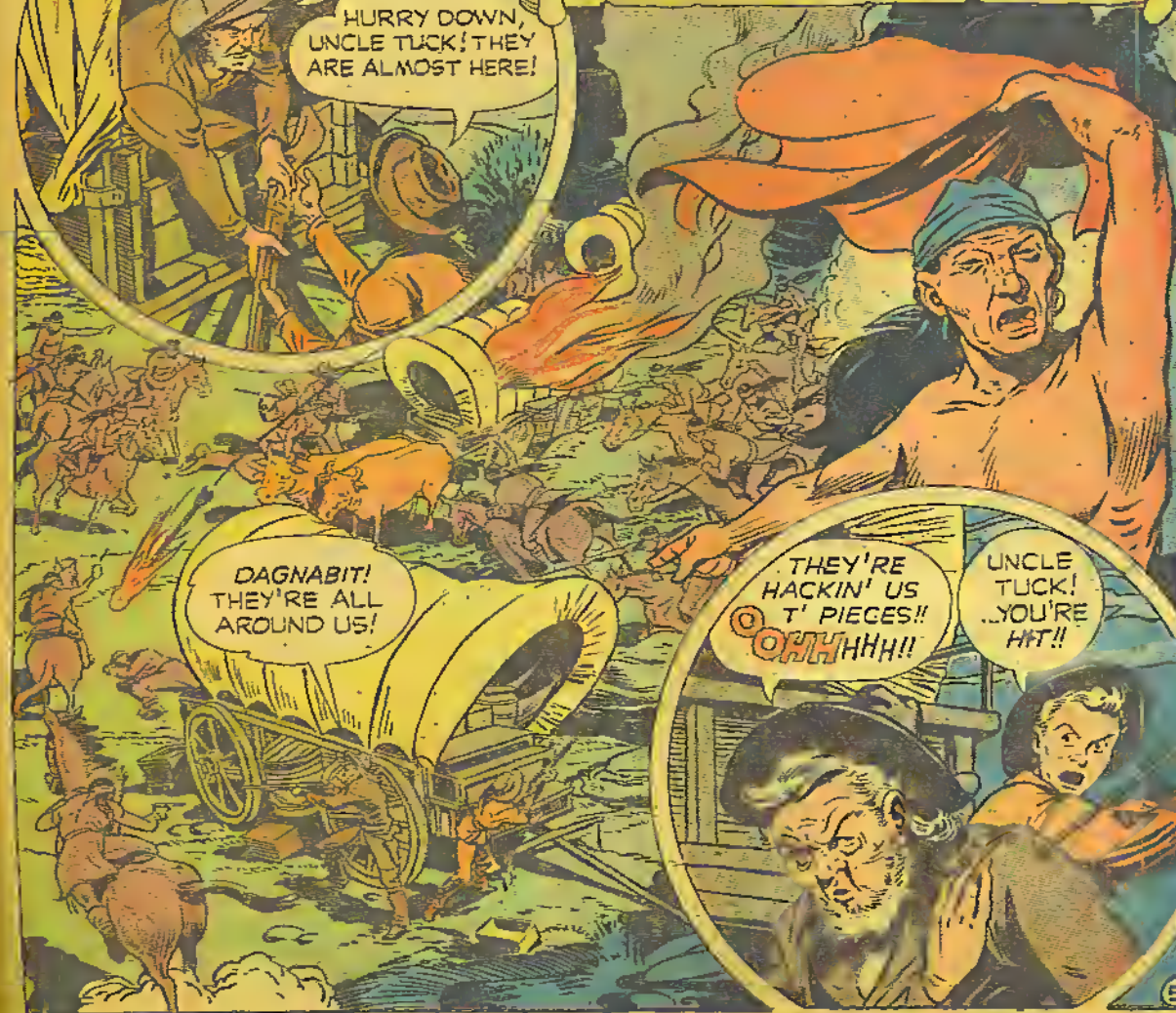
HOLY HOPPING
HOOPSTICKS! IT'S
A TRAP!!! THE
OTHERS WERE DECOYS
TO DRAW TH' TROOPS!
THIS MEANS A
FIGHT, LAD!



WE AIN'T GOT TIME TO
DRAW A CIRCLE! HERE'S A
RIFLE, JIM... YER NOW AN
INJUN FIGHTER!

HURRY DOWN,
UNCLE TUCK! THEY
ARE ALMOST HERE!

THE INDIANS SUCCEED IN BREAKING
THROUGH THE WAGON BARRICADE! SOON
THERE IS FIGHTING ON TWO SIDES...THE
SMALL BAND OF DEFENDERS ARE ENGULFED
IN A DELUGE OF SCREAMING REDSKINS!



DAGNABIT!
THEY'RE ALL
AROUND US!

THEY'RE
HACKIN' US
T' PIECES!!
OOHHHHH!!

UNCLE
TUCK!
...YOU'RE
HIT!!



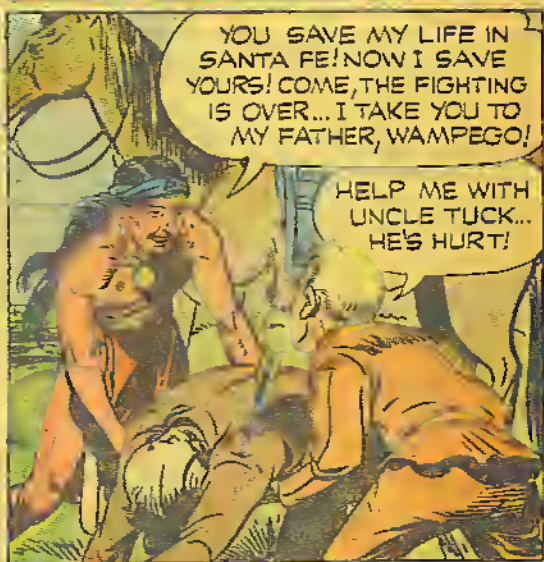
HERE...LET ME HELP YOU!

BEHIND YOU, BOY...WATCH OUT!



NO!! DO NOT KILL HIM!!

LITTLE FEATHER!



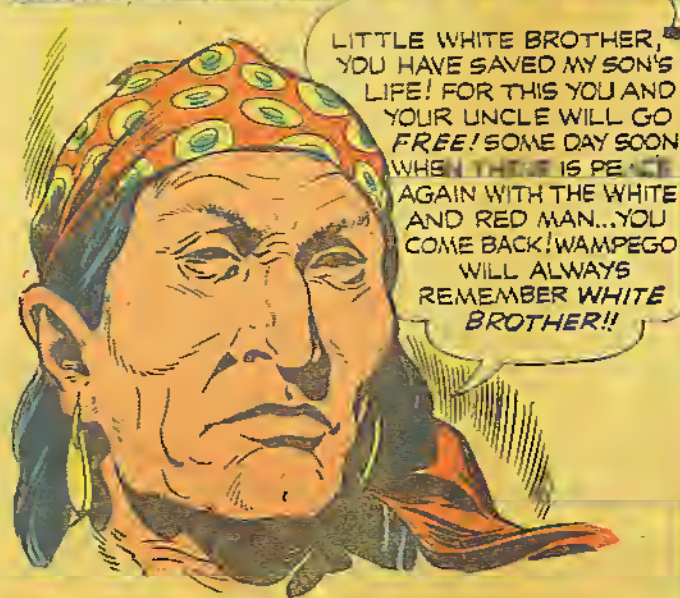
YOU SAVE MY LIFE IN SANTA FE! NOW I SAVE YOURS! COME, THE FIGHTING IS OVER... I TAKE YOU TO MY FATHER, WAMPEGO!

HELP ME WITH UNCLE TUCK... HE'S HURT!



LATER... AT THE INDIAN ENCAMPMENT...

I HAVE TOLD MY FATHER WHAT HAPPENED... HE WILL SPEAK TO YOU!



LITTLE WHITE BROTHER, YOU HAVE SAVED MY SON'S LIFE! FOR THIS YOU AND YOUR UNCLE WILL GO FREE! SOME DAY SOON WHEN THERE IS PEACE AGAIN WITH THE WHITE AND RED MAN... YOU COME BACK! WAMPEGO WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER WHITE BROTHER!!



DO YOU THINK WE'LL EVER COME BACK HERE AGAIN, UNCLE TUCK?

Y'KNOW, JIM... IN A WAY I'M KINDA GLAD YOU DIDN'T MIND YER OWN BUSINESS BACK IN SANTA FE!